

## **“What Everyone Should Know About the Holy Spirit” Part 4 - 1 Corinthians 12:11-13 – November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

- Today's teaching will be part four of a series I've titled, "What Everyone Should Know About the Holy Spirit."
- As we continue our study on the Holy Spirit, we find ourselves today, tackling the very touchy topic of the speaking in tongues.
- This because, there's much controversy and confusion concerning this topic, and sadly, it's due in large part to ones ignorance.

### **1. Christians can be ignorant about the gifts (Verses 1-3)**

- Here Paul tells them he doesn't want them to be ignorant about the gifts of the Holy Spirit nor let the past have undue influence.

### **2. There are different kinds of gifts and service (Verses 4-7)**

- He describes different gifts but the same Spirit, different ministries but the same Lord and different workings, but the same God.

### **3. There are specific gifts for specific purposes (Verses 8-10)**

- He lists the gifts; a word of wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discerning spirits, tongues and interpretation.

### **4. Spiritual gifts are not a sign of spiritual maturity (Verses 11-13)**

- v11 Paul emphasizes that gifts are the work of one and the same Spirit, as God distributes them to each one as He determines.
- v12 He says that just as a body, though one, has many parts all its many parts form one body, and so too is this true with Christ.
- v13 We're all baptized by one Spirit, whether Jew Gentile, slave or free to form one body, as we're given the one Spirit to drink.

- I find it interesting that Paul is not emphasizing each specific gift as much as the source of each specific gift, coming from God.
- I'm of the belief that the reason his emphasis is on the gifts coming from the same Spirit is because they all had different gifts.
- As such, those who had the gift of tongues may have been inclined to think they were somehow superior to those who did not.
- It's for this reason I'd like to answer the most often asked questions concerning the gift of tongues beginning with this first one.

### **1. Is this gift only given to mature believers?**

- No, the Spirit gives to each one of us individually as He wills. The specific purpose is to both glorify God and edify the believer.
- Churches have used gifts of the Spirit as a litmus test instead of the fruit of the Spirit to put people into positions of leadership.
- The problem with this is that gifts are not a measure of spiritual maturity, rather, fruit that has grown and matured over time is.

### **2. What is the gift of tongues?**

- The gift of tongues is an unknown prayer language given by God to believers, whereby they can communicate to God in prayer.
- Because it's a heavenly language, praying in tongues enables us to glorify God in ways we cannot with our earthly language.
- While we are unable to understand what we say when we pray, the Holy Spirit in us is praying in a way that God understands.

1 Corinthians 14:14–15 (NIV) — 14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. 15 So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my understanding; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my understanding.

### **3. Are tongues the only evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit?**

- No, there are only three accounts in the book of Acts where speaking in tongues accompanied the baptism with the Holy Spirit.
- Conversely, there are numerous other accounts also in the book of Acts, where there is no mention of the speaking in tongues.
- In other words, not every Christian will receive this gift of the speaking in tongues when they are baptized with the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:27–31 (NIV) — 27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. 28 And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? 30 Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? 31 Now eagerly desire the greater gifts. And yet I will show you the most excellent way.

### **4. What's the difference between speaking and praying in tongues?**

- Praying in tongues is for the edification of the believer individually, whereas speaking in tongues; is for the church corporately.
- However, as we'll see when we get to 1 Corinthians 14, the Apostle Paul lays out the guidelines when it comes to the church.
- More specifically, whenever the church comes together, there is an order that must be kept when anyone speaks in tongues.

1 Corinthians 14:26–29 (NIV) 26 What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up. 27 If anyone speaks in a tongue, two—or at the most three—should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret. 28 If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and to God. 29 Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said.

### **5. Why is the gift of tongues so controversial and divisive?**

- There are a couple of reasons, one of which has to do with the spiritual pride of being competitive about having spiritual gifts.
- Actually, this has led some who do not have this gift to fane it, lest they be seen as being less spiritual than the ones who do.
- Another reason is that some have made synonymous the neglecting of the gifts with the cessation of the gifts in church history.

1 Timothy 4:14 (NIV) — 14 Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you.